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Discrimination of sexual minorities and plans to relocate

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DISCRIMINATION OF SEXUAL MINORITIES AND PLANS TO RELOCATE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
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in

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ABSTRACT

LGBTQ individuals make relocation decisions with their sexual orientation and gender identity in mind (Gorman-Murray, 2007). The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between non-violent discrimination faced by LGBTQ individuals and whether or not those individuals have future plans to relocate. A literature review of LGBTQ discrimination and LGBTQ relocation is discussed, and a secondary data analysis was conducted on a sample of LGBTQ individuals who participated in a quality-of-life survey. All hypotheses were supported except the hypothesis that analyzed anti-LGBTQ discrimination and its association with time until relocation. Results indicated that experiencing anti-LGBTQ nonviolent discrimination was significantly associated with reporting plans to relocate. A logistic regression also reported that experiencing anti-LGBTQ nonviolent discrimination predicted plans to relocate. Lastly, low age was significantly associated with reporting plans to relocate.

Keywords: LGBTQ, discrimination, sexual minorities, relocation

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Approximately 16% of adults living in the United States relocate each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Individuals relocate for many different reasons including employment, education, and economic opportunities, as well as feelings of safety, security, and a sense of belonging (Hagelskamp, Suárez-Orozco, & Hughes, 2010). In the United States, relocation rates also differ from state to state. Louisiana has the lowest out-migration among all states, with 78% of people residing in Louisiana identifying as natives (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). California, Florida, New Jersey, and New York have the highest out-migration rates in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Characteristics that make an individual more likely to relocate include being separated, having a higher educational and economic status, being between 18 and 29 years old, state of birth, and being biracial (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Also, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, also known as the sexual minorities, are more likely than their heterosexual peers to relocate (Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005). Rosenfeld and Byung-Soo (2005) reported that this is due to LGBTQ individuals showing more independence from families and communities of origin compared to their heterosexual peers.

LGBTQ individuals are among few groups that often lack traditional social support of biological family and kin, which leads LGBTQ individuals to look beyond family for social support (Rothblum & Factor, 2001). LGBTQ communities often act as a family to individuals who because of their sexual orientation or gender identity have been estranged from biological family members (Harper & Schneider, 2003). Psychological sense of community theory emphasizes the importance of an individual's perceived sense of belonging with a larger community, something LGBTQ communities foster for sexual minorities (Harper & Schneider, 2003; Sarason, 1974).

LGBTQ individuals make relocation decisions with their sexual orientation and gender identity in mind (Gorman-Murray, 2007). While a significant amount of research focuses on the effects of involuntary relocation, little research emphasizes the reasons behind voluntary relocation (Hall et al., 2008; Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005). Voluntary relocation as a result of intolerance and discrimination has had even less attention in research. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between discrimination faced by LGBTQ individuals and their future plans to relocate. A literature review of LGBTQ discrimination and LGBTQ relocation is discussed, and a secondary data analysis will be conducted on a sample of LGBTQ individuals who participated in a quality-of-life survey.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

LGBTQ Discrimination

The literature on LGBTQ discrimination uses extensive terminology that must be defined. *Prejudice* is defined as negative attitudes or beliefs towards individuals based on inaccurate generalizations of personal characteristics, such as race, age, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation (Bergen, 2001). The definition of homophobia has shifted over the past few decades. The term first focused on the fear of same-sex-oriented individuals, yet there has been a trend to redefine homophobia less as a fear and more as a prejudice toward or hatred of them (Brown & Groscup, 2009; Gramick, 1983). Logan (1996) renamed homophobia *homoprejudice* to more accurately capture the definitional shift. For the purpose of expanding the term's scope, *homophobia* is defined as prejudice against LGBTQ individuals or others who do not follow heterosexual norms (Brown & Groscup, 2009). Herek (2009) defined *heterosexism* as a belief system that condemns and denounces LGBTQ individuals while reinforcing heterosexuality as a superior sexuality. An example of heterosexism in the United States is the lack of legal protection for same-sex couples in housing and employment (Heath, 2009).

Prejudice can often lead to *discrimination*, which is the unequal treatment of individuals or groups of individuals based on personal characteristics, such as race, age, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation (Kassam, Williams, & Patten, 2012). Discrimination can be direct or indirect in nature. *Direct discrimination* involves unequal treatment motivated consciously and intentionally by negative beliefs and attitudes towards the individual's or group's personal characteristics (Forshaw & Pilgerstorfer, 2008). An example of direct discrimination is denying an individual employment due to his or her disclosed or perceived sexual orientation. *Indirect*

discrimination involves disadvantaging or depriving an individual or a group of individuals of equal treatment, yet the motivation is not consciously or intentionally due to certain personal characteristics (Forshaw & Pilgerstorfer, 2008). An example of indirect discrimination includes insurance benefits that apply only to married couples, which excludes non-married heterosexual and same-sex couples.

LGBTQ Definitions

Before defining LGBTQ, it is important to differentiate sexual orientation, sexual identity, and gender identity. *Sexual orientation* refers to a person's tendency to be romantically, emotionally, or sexually attracted to another person, or the "affectional disposition to same and/or opposite sex" individuals (Gonsiorek, Sell, & Weinrich, 1995, pp. 40-41; Gorman, 1994). The most well-known classification categories of sexual orientations include heterosexual, homosexual, pansexual (i.e., individuals with fluid sexuality; Green, Payne, & Green, 2011), and bisexual, although many researchers see sexual orientation, as well as gender identity, less categorical and more on a continuum (Sell, 1997). Sexual identity and gender identity are similar in that both are self-perceptions. *Sexual identity* is how an individual sees himself or herself in relation to his or her sexual orientation (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, heterosexual, or straight; Frankel, 2004). *Gender identity* is how an individual sees himself or herself as a man, woman, neither, or both (American Psychological Association [APA], 2011).

Many terms are used to refer to individuals who identify as LGBTQ. To begin, LGBTQ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning. The term *lesbian* refers to women who are physically, romantically, and emotionally attracted to other women (Savage & Harley, 2009). The term *gay* is typically reserved for men who are physically, romantically, and emotionally attracted to other men (Savage & Harley, 2009), although some

same-sex-oriented women use this term instead of or in addition to “lesbian.” *Bisexual* refers to any individual whose sexual thoughts, feelings, or behaviors involve both males and females (Savage & Harley, 2009). *Transgender* is an umbrella term that includes a broad range of gender identities and presentations, including transvestites/cross-dressers, drag performers, androgynous individuals, and transsexuals (Mathy, Schillace, Coleman, & Berquist, 2002). Lastly, *queer* is defined as a diverse and fluid range of non-heterosexual identities, which include LGBT individuals as well as other individuals who view their sexuality on a continuum (Gorman-Murray, 2007). *Sexual minorities* includes LGBTQ individuals, or individuals who do not consider themselves heterosexual or sex-gender (i.e., biology-identity) congruent (Frost & Meyer, 2012). Rehaag (2009) added that the term sexual minorities defines a range of sexual and gender identities on a continuum, extending beyond categorical sexual orientations and gender identities such as LGBTQ, including individuals who challenge heterosexual norms. For the purpose of this discussion, the terms LGBTQ, sexual minorities, and queer are used interchangeably to describe individuals who identify as LGBTQ, or individuals who see themselves on a continuum of sexual and gender identities.

More specific LGBTQ terminology is often used interchangeably in casual language yet should be specifically differentiated in research. Beginning with biology, *sex* refers to an individual’s biological manifestations of genes and hormones such as male or female, while *gender* refers to the psychological, cultural, or social characteristics of human behavior, such as masculine or feminine (Kaiser, 2012). An individual who identifies as transgender may be born a female (sex), yet identifies with socially masculine (gender) characteristics (Kaiser, 2012). Transsexual individuals not only identify with characteristics of the opposite sex, but they may have a complete embodiment of the opposite sex (APA, 2000).

History of LGBT Discrimination

Sexual minorities have historically experienced chronic discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, partner and parental rights, and human services and benefits (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993). While some anti-discriminatory policies have been put in place to protect them, LGBTQ individuals still lack full federal-, and in many cases state-level protection against discrimination (Wesley, Hendrix, & Williams, 2011).

LGBT discrimination has been a part of United States history for decades (Lewis, 1997). The sodomy laws of the 1600s outlawed same-sex sexual behavior and made it a crime punishable by death, reinforcing a heterosexist belief system (Robertson, 2010). In 2003, the *Lawrence v. Texas* case ruled sodomy laws unconstitutional in the United States (Robertson, 2010). During the Cold War, lesbian and gay individuals' sexual behaviors were seen not only as immoral, but also as a national security threat (Lewis, 1997). In 1953 under President Eisenhower, lesbians and gay men were prohibited from employment at the federal level in civil service occupations, which included employment in the military (Lewis, 1997). Violation of these policies would often result in investigations and arrests (Lewis, 1997). In 1975, the United States Civil Service Commission removed the ban due to a lack of empirical evidence of a correlation between homosexuality and job efficiency (Lewis, 1997).

In 1993, under President Clinton, *Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue (DADT)* was signed into law acknowledging that LGBTQ individuals serve in the United States military, while forcing those individuals to remain silent about their gender identity or sexual orientation (Bowling, Firestone, & Harris, 2005). *DADT* permitted LGBTQ individuals to express their sexuality privately without the consequences of the 1953 laws, such as investigations and arrests (Lewis, 1997). Between 1994 and 2003, however, approximately 10,000 LGBTQ individuals

were discharged from the military because of their sexual orientation or gender identity as a result of *DADT* (Blue Ribbon Commission, 2006). On September 20, 2011, under the Obama administration, *DADT* was repealed, allowing LGBTQ individuals to serve openly in the United States military (U.S. Department of Defense, 2011). At the time of this writing, the Supreme Court has heard an appeal with regards to the *Defense of Marriage Act*, a policy that bans same-sex marriage on a federal level (Solomon & Tiemann, 2012). The policy, also known as DOMA, defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman, and it also gives states the authority to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages in which couples were legally wed in a different state (Solomon & Tiemann, 2012).

The United States has made landmark decisions to ban discrimination based on certain personal characteristics. For instance, the *Civil Rights Act of 1866* prohibited discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity (Russo, 2006). The 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote by banning discrimination based on sex in voting (Chapman & Mills, 2006). The *Civil Rights Act of 1964* banned discrimination in public places and employment based on “race, color, religion, sex, and national origin” (Brauer, 1983, p. 37). Currently, discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, and religion is illegal in the United States, yet this protection does not extend to LGBTQ individuals (Wesley et al., 2011). Rather, discrimination based on sexual orientation is legal in 29 states, including Louisiana (Human Rights Campaign [HRC], 2012d). In 34 states, it is legal to discriminate based on gender identity, which includes transgender individuals (HRC, 2012d). The *Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)* is a legislative proposal that would prohibit workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity on the federal level (Robinson, Nichols, Goodman, & Cousley, 2009). This act has been unable to pass through both the House of Representative and the Senate

together after numerous attempts, although the House of Representatives passed the bill on September 27, 2007 (HRC, 2012b).

Currently, some states ban same-sex marriage, same-sex adoption, and same-sex partner benefits (Harper & Schneider, 2003). This legislation has changed over the years and now differs from state to state. As of this writing, the following states allow same-sex marriage:

Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Maryland, and Washington, as well as the District of Columbia (National Council of State Legislatures [NCSL], 2013). Moreover, ballot initiatives are being put in place to repeal gay marriage laws in both of those states (HRC, 2012c). Although same-sex marriage is banned in the majority of states, some states offer civil unions or domestic partnerships, which allow same-sex couples partial rights and benefits of marriage (HRC, 2012d). States that allow same-sex civil unions include Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, and Rhode Island (NCSL, 2012). States that allow domestic partnerships include California, Oregon, Hawaii, Nevada, and Wisconsin (NCSL, 2012). Louisiana does not provide any type of legal recognition for same-sex couples, which includes having bans against same-sex marriage, same-sex civil unions, and same-sex domestic partnerships (HRC, 2012d).

Discrimination in the Workplace

Without federal protection for LGBTQ individuals against discrimination, it is legal in many states, including Louisiana, to demote, fire, fail to hire, or deny promotions to individuals based on perceived or disclosed sexual orientation or gender identity (HRC, 2012d; Lambda Legal, 2006). Discrimination is also experienced in the form of different wage earnings for gay males (Black, Gates, Sanders, & Taylor, 2000). For instance, research has consistently shown a wage difference between gay or bisexual men when compared to heterosexual men, although

there has been no significant wage difference reported between lesbian or bisexual women and heterosexual women (Black et al., 2000). Badgett (1995) reported that gay and bisexual men earned up to 27% less than their heterosexual male peers.

Along with wage differences, workplace discrimination among sexual minorities includes denial of promotions and termination of employment (Herek, 2009). A recent national sample of lesbian and gay individuals concluded that 15% believed their employment had been terminated or promotions were denied due to disclosed or perceived sexual orientation (Herek, 2009). A meta-analysis by Badgett and colleagues (Badgett, Sears, Lau, & Ho, 2009) reported 16%–68% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals experience discrimination at their place of employment.

Discrimination in the Housing Market

Little research exists on LGBTQ individuals' experiences of discrimination in the rental housing market (Ahmed, Andersson, & Hammarstedt, 2008). A study by Herek (2009) reported that more than 10% of LGBTQ individuals reported housing or employment discrimination based on their perceived or disclosed sexual orientation. Ahmed and Hammarstedt (2009) conducted a field experiment that looked at discrimination against LGBTQ individuals in the rental housing market. The study concluded that heterosexual couples were 27% more likely than same-sex couple to receive phone calls from the landlord about possible rental homes after visiting the prospective homes in person.

Discrimination in Adoption

Currently, state legislation bans same-sex adoption in many states (Harper & Schneider, 2003). Brown and colleagues (Brown, Smalling, Groza, & Ryan, 2009) reported that the majority of LGBTQ individuals surveyed have experienced obstacles during the adopting or fostering process. Such barriers include discriminatory laws and agency policies, lack of emotional

support, lack of legal and institutionalized validation, and personal doubts (Brown et al., 2009; Goldberg, 2006). An example of policy discrimination includes states that prohibit second-parent adoptions (Goldberg, 2006). *Second-parent adoptions* extend guardianship rights to the parent who is not legally recognized as the primary parent (Goldberg, 2006). Those individuals who are not the primary legal guardian report feeling out of place in many aspects of the child's life (Perlesz & McNair, 2004). LGBTQ parents obtain legal guardianship and rights, often at the cost of one parent having all parental rights while the other parent has none (Ross et al., 2008).

Discrimination Among LGBTQ Older Adults

The population of older adults in the United States is growing rapidly, currently representing 13% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The United States Census Bureau (2011) estimated that there are approximately 40.3 million individuals 65 years and over living in the United States, which is 5.3 million more older adults than the 2000 Census report. The population of older adults that identify as LGBTQ is also increasing, with approximately 1 to 3 million LGBTQ older adults living in the United States currently (Grant, 2010). That number is expected to increase to approximately 4 to 6 million by 2030 (Grant, 2010). Although there is an increasing population of LGBTQ older adults, little research exists on LGBTQ older adults' experiences with discrimination (Averett, Yoon, & Jenkins, 2011).

Averett and colleagues (2011) referred to LGBTQ older adults as an invisible population due to the combination of heterosexism and an ageist society. The context in which today's LGBTQ older adults grew up was that of concealment, rendering this group of individuals more invisible (Butler, 2004). Perceived discrimination has been linked to an increased mortality risk among older adults (Barnes et al., 2008). Luo and colleagues (Luo, Grandberg, & Wentworth, 2012) reported that 63% of older adults experience at least one type of everyday discrimination

(chronic yet minor experiences of unfair treatment), while 31% reported at least one major discriminatory event in a lifetime.

Older adults grow increasingly more dependent on public assistance programs as they age (Cahill & South, 2002). A majority of older adults depend on Social Security for major source of income. For example, for 65% of older adults receiving Social Security, the assistance is the majority of their income, with 36% reporting Social Security is 90% of their income, and 24% reporting it is their sole source of income (Social Security Administration, 2010). However, LGBTQ older adults are discriminated against in policy with regards to Social Security, pension plans, housing, healthcare, and long-term residential care (Cahill & South, 2002). For example, LGBTQ individuals are not granted spousal or survival benefits for their partners due to the ban on same-sex marriage in many states (Cahill & South, 2002). This results in \$124 million annually in income that is inaccessible for same-sex couples (Cahill & South, 2002).

Approximately 75% of lesbian and gay older adults live alone, with gay and bisexual men age 50 and older twice as likely as their heterosexual peers to live alone and lesbian and bisexual women over 50 one third more likely to live alone (New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2008). LGBTQ older adults are less likely than heterosexual older adults to have adult children provide care for them, often relying on friends and chosen family instead (de Vries, 2009; LGBT Movement Advancement Project & SAGE, 2010). While married heterosexual couples have the right to share a room in nursing home facilities, same-sex partners lack that right (LGBT Movement Advancement Project & SAGE, 2010). Johnson and colleagues (Johnson, Jackson, Arnette, & Koffmann, 2005) reported that LGBTQ older adults fear negligence and abuse by staff members and peers at assisted-care residencies. The same study reported 73% of individuals surveyed believed anti-LGBTQ discrimination exists in assisted care

facilities, with 74% of individuals being unaware of any discrimination policies that include sexual orientation.

Conceptualization of Relocation Patterns

Individuals relocate for reasons including employment, education, and economic opportunities, as well as feelings of safety, security, and a sense of belonging (Hagelskamp et al., 2010). *Relocation* is defined simply as changing places of residency from one location to another (Pope & Kang, 2010). *Geographic mobility* refers to the tendency of individuals to change geographic locations (Ge & Christiadi, 2006). While a significant amount of research focuses on the effects of involuntary relocation (Hall et al., 2008), little research emphasizes the reasons behind voluntary relocation (Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005), particularly as a result of intolerance and discrimination.

Involuntary vs. Voluntary Relocation

Different populations tend to relocate for different reasons. *Involuntary relocation* includes individuals who are mandated to move from one location to another (Nuttman-Shwartz, Dekel, & Tuval-Mashiach, 2011). For example, older adults with declining health and independence are often forced to relocate into long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes or retirement communities (Pope & Kang, 2010). Natural disasters often result in involuntary relocation, such as the 1.2 million individuals forced to relocate after Hurricane Katrina (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006). *Voluntary relocation* involves choosing to move from one location to another, while the motivation for relocation varies greatly (Goetz, 2002). An example of voluntary relocation is immigrants relocating for the possibility of greater economic or employment opportunities. Migration of LGBTQ individuals as a result of discrimination and

prejudice is another example of voluntary relocation. Little research exists on the current relocation patterns of LGBTQ individuals as well as motivations to relocate.

Geographic Mobility of LGBTQ Individuals

Generally speaking, same-sex couples relocate more than heterosexual couples (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The 1990 Census reported that 48.1% of heterosexual couples are geographically mobile, while 67.5% of same-sex couples are geographically mobile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This means that same-sex couples relocate 2.24 times more than heterosexual couples. Ten years later, the 2000 Census reported a slight decrease in same-sex geographic mobility to from 67.5% to 51.7%, although same-sex mobility was still higher than the 46.6% of heterosexual geographic mobility (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This slight decrease could be the result of many factors, including more tolerance and acceptance of LGBTQ individuals in mainstream society, resulting in less relocation due to intolerance (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Sexual minorities are also more likely than their heterosexual peers to live further away from their parents and birthplace (Rothblum & Factor, 2001). This results in LGBTQ individuals looking beyond family of origin for social support (Rothblum & Factor, 2001). An example is extended social support, such as community support, which has been associated with positive mental health among LGBTQ individuals (Friedman, Koeske, Silvestre, Korr, & Sites, 2006; Willging, Salvador, & Kano, 2006).

LGBTQ Communities

Sexual minorities are among the few groups that often lack traditional social support of biological family and kin (Rothblum & Factor, 2001). This often leads LGBTQ individuals to look beyond family of origin for social support, such as to LGBTQ communities (Rothblum &

Factor, 2001). The lesbian and gay liberation movement strongly influenced the development of LGBTQ communities in the United States (Harper & Schneider, 2003). Many researchers believe that the movement began with the Stonewall Riots of 1969, when police raided a New York City gay bar, the Stonewall Inn (Ritscher, 2003). At the time of the raid, many LGBTQ individuals had experienced much discrimination and harassment by law enforcement and on June 28, 1969, those individual decided to take action (Ritscher, 2003). The series of riots resulted in a more cohesive LGBTQ community that was inspired to combat discrimination as a group (Ritscher, 2003).

LGBTQ communities or LGBTQ neighborhoods can be defined as regions to which many LGBTQ individuals relocate to find acceptance and a sense of belonging among other sexual minorities (Harper & Schneider, 2003). *LGBTQ communities* can also describe the LGBTQ population as a whole (Harper & Schneider, 2003). The LGBTQ community often acts as a family to individuals who have been estranged from their family of origin as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Harper & Schneider, 2003). Some LGBTQ communities provide resources that strive for equal rights, while also acting as a buffer against homophobia and anti-LGBTQ discrimination (Woolwine, 2000). Positive feelings towards an individual's community has been correlated with protective factors, such as an increase in social support (Young, Russell, & Powers, 2004), a decrease in mental health problems (McLaren, 2009), and an overall more positive quality of life (Mak, Cheung, & Law, 2009).

Oswald and Culton (2003) surveyed 527 LGBTQ individuals living in rural areas and found that participants reported that the "worst" parts of their communities are the lack of LGBTQ resources, homophobic social climates, and lack of equal rights (p. 73). Individuals reported the "best" aspects of living in their rural communities are relationships with friends,

families, and partners; high quality of life; and the local LGBTQ community (Oswald & Culton, 2003, p. 74). The majority of heterosexual young adults remain in their community of origin as opposed to relocating to different communities (Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005). Rosenfeld and Byung-Soo (2005) hypothesized that as LGBTQ couples become accepted by mainstream America, the geographic mobility of these individuals will decline and eventually even out to that of heterosexual couples' mobility.

Research on the relocation of LGBTQ individuals often focus on the shift from rural to urban communities (Gorman-Murray, 2007). Urban communities portray a sense of freedom, including sexual freedom that rural communities often lack (Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005). Weston (1995) found correlations suggesting that LGBTQ individuals relocate in order to explore their sexuality in a more open and accepting environment. Fortier (2001) interpreted LGBTQ relocation as a coming out process in which the individual begins exploring his or her sexual and gender identity. Rubin (1993) believed that the rural-to-urban shift was due to the amount of laborers brought to the cities to work, creating an environment that would foster communities. Industrialization helped facilitate the rural-to-urban migration of sexual minorities as well (Rubin, 1993; Strange, 1997). Most research on queer migration has focused on the shift from rural-to-urban communities, normalizing the rural-to-urban trend, while neglecting to look at other possible migration patterns (Gorman-Murray, 2007).

Relocation of Older Adults

Mead and colleagues (Mead, Eckert, Zimmerman, & Schumacher, 2005) reported that relocation is among the list of the top 10 life stressors an individual will face. Relocation has been associated with a decrease in social support systems, such as family, friends, and community support, as well as an increased fear of the unknown (Drummet, Coleman, & Cable,

2003). Little research explores relocation patterns among older adults, also known as late-life relocation (Krout & Wethington, 2003). Bjelde and Sanders (2012) discussed seasonal relocation of older adults, also known as snowbirds, often choosing to migrate away from harsh winters to warmer locations. The study concluded that these individuals were able to adapt to change, able to establish and maintain friendships, and the migration promoted positive quality of life for the older adults migrating (Bjelde & Sanders, 2012). The research focuses primarily on involuntary relocation, such as relocation into long-term health care facilities, which includes assisted living facilities and nursing homes (Jungers, 2010). Of the literature that exists on late-life relocation, even fewer studies focus on LGBTQ older adult relocation.

When older adults relocate into long-term health facilities, they face specific risks such as a decline in physiological health and immune system functioning, emotional disturbances such as grief and depression (Jones, Marcantonio, & Rabinowitz, 2003), and an elevated mortality rate (Farhall, Trauer, Newton, & Cheung, 2003). Older adults living in long-term care facilities are three times more likely than older adults living in the community to report depressive symptoms (Cuijpers & van Lammeren, 1999).

A lack of research exists on relocation among older adults, more specifically LGBTQ older adults. This study aims to further the research of LGBTQ older adult relocation by examining desire to relocate as it relates to age.

Theoretical Foundation

Humans are social beings that have a desire and need for social interactions and connections with a community (Mashek, Cannaday, & Tangney, 2007). *Psychological sense of community*, also known as PSOC, is a theory by Sarason (1974) that emphasizes the importance of an individual's perceived sense of belonging with a larger community. PSOC was created

with the goal of being applicable to any type of community including, but not limited to, workplace, immigrant, religious, academic, virtual, and geographic communities (Obst & White, 2004). McMillan and Chavis (1986) proposed four dimensions to the PSOC theory including “membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection” (p. 9). These four criteria serve as a clear and concrete yet intimate description of PSOC for researchers (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Obst and White (2004) defined the dimensions in the following ways. *Membership* is the feeling of belonging by being part of a group. *Influence* refers to cohesiveness and members’ feelings of control and impact over the community. *Integration and fulfillment of needs* includes common goals and values that bring about collective and individual needs. Lastly, *shared emotional connection* is the psychological and emotional bond among a group of individuals.

McMillan (1996) defined *community connectedness* as individuals’ merging desires to belong to and form emotional relationships with a collective group. Community connectedness has been associated with establishing a positive sense of collective identity among groups (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). Studies of sexual minority community connectedness tend to use gay male samples, which inadequately represents the LGBTQ community in its entirety (Frost & Meyer, 2012). Meyer (2003) reported that community connectedness is a collective coping resource or buffer against negative implications as a result of sexual minority status. Collectively, LGBTQ communities can act as buffers for the effects of stigma, prejudice, and discrimination that can exist as a result of an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity (Major & O’Brien, 2005; Meyer, 2003). Relocation to LGBTQ communities is a means to escape hostile and intolerant areas.

Anti-LGBTQ prejudice often creates an environment where LGBTQ individuals lack a sense of belonging, frequently resulting in a desire to relocate (McCallum & McLaren, 2011). *Belongingness* is defined as a basic human need in which an individual feels personally integrated into a larger group or system, often resulting in feelings of being needed, valued, and accepted (Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, & Collier, 1992). Low levels of belongingness have been linked to high levels of anxiety and low self-esteem, as well as high rates of depressive symptoms among LGBTQ individuals (Lee & Robbins, 1998; McLaren, Jude, & McLachlan, 2008).

The PSOC theory, as well as community connectedness, contributes to the idea of LGBTQ relocation as a result of LGBTQ discrimination. LGBTQ-unfriendly laws and policies affect an individual's PSOC as well as community connectedness. LGBTQ individuals may be more inclined to relocate away from states that have more anti-LGBTQ laws in comparison to those states that have more pro-LGBTQ laws. Louisiana laws discriminate against same-sex couples with regards to partner rights, benefits, adoption, and marriage (HRC, 2012d). In Louisiana, same-sex couples lack the legal protection to make medical decisions on behalf of their partners in the case that the patient is unable to make such a decision for himself or herself (HRC, 2012d). Spousal or survival benefits are denied to same-sex couples in the United States, amounting to \$124 million annually in inaccessible income (Cahill & South, 2002). Same-sex adoption laws in Louisiana do not explicitly prohibit same-sex couples from filing for joint adoption (HRC, 2012d). The law is unclear as to whether or not same-sex couples would be permitted to do so (HRC, 2012d). Lastly, Louisiana's constitutional amendment bans same-sex marriage (HRC, 2012d). These laws may contribute to a lack of PSOC and community connectedness among LGBTQ individuals within the state of Louisiana.

Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to investigate the correlation between discrimination faced by LGBTQ individuals and their future plans to relocate. Based on the literature, this study is driven by two primary hypotheses:

H1: Experiencing anti-LGBTQ nonviolent discrimination will be associated with plans to relocate, time until relocation, and reasons for relocation.

H.1.1: Those who report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination will be more likely to report plans to relocate than those not experiencing such discrimination.

H.1.2: Those who report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination will be more likely to report plans to relocate sooner than those not experiencing such discrimination.

H.1.3: Those who report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination will be more likely to report an unfriendly environment as their reason for relocating than those who didn't report this as a reason.

H.1.4 Experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination will predict plans to relocate.

H.2: Age will be associated with plans to relocate.

H.2.1: The younger one is, the more likely he or she is to report plans to relocate.

H.2.2: Being older will predict plans to relocate.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Design

This study used a cross-sectional research design, collecting data from one group of participants at a single point in time to better understand correlations between variables (Bowden, 2011). This type of research design is appropriate for collecting quality-of-life (i.e., descriptive) data from a minority sample (DeRosa, Maccio, & Wilks, 2012).

Sampling

Nonprobability sampling is a sampling technique based on availability of participants rather than randomness (Guo & Hussey, 2004). In a nonprobability sample, not all individuals in a population have an equal opportunity to be selected (Guo & Hussey, 2004). However, this is an appropriate technique for vulnerable, hard-to-reach populations such as LGBTQ individuals (Mark, 1996).

Purposive sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling that targets a particular group of people within a population that is difficult to locate (Guarte, 2006). With vulnerable populations such as LGBTQ individuals, purposive sampling allows researchers to use population-specific outlets, such as LGBTQ organizations or churches known for sexual minority acceptance, to locate large samples (DeRosa et al., 2012). Convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling in which researchers gather data from a sample based on the accessibility of the participants (Özdemir, St. Louis, & Topbaş, 2011). An example of the convenience sampling that took place in this study is targeting businesses, such as LGBTQ-friendly coffee shops or bookstores, to locate participants (DeRosa et al., 2012). Lastly, snowball sampling also played a part in acquiring participants for the study (DeRosa et al., 2012). Snowball sampling is another type of nonprobability sampling used by researchers to locate hard-to-reach participants

(Goodman, 2011). Snowball sampling begins with the researcher contacting a few participants, and those individuals are asked to spread the word to other individuals or provide information to the researchers to reach others who would qualify to participate in the study or program (Sadler, Lee, Lim, & Fullerton, 2010).

Participants

The original call for participants drew 452 respondents. Of those, 107 were excluded due to reporting a zip code outside of the greater Baton Rouge area ($n = 100$), identifying as heterosexual (nontransgender; $n = 5$), not reporting sexual orientation ($n = 1$), and not meeting the age minimum of 18 years ($n = 1$). These exclusions resulted in a final sample of 345, 96% of whom completed the survey within 3 months of the survey first being distributed (DeRosa et al., 2012).

The sample was majority European American/White (83.5%), male (50.1%), and gay (47.2%). The mean age of the participants was 37.2 years ($SD = 12.9$).

Instrumentation

Social work graduate students and the board of directors of a LGBTQ advocacy organization worked together to develop the original (2007) survey used for the quality-of-life study (DeRosa et al., 2012), a survey that was updated 4 years later for the current study. The updated survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and included 53 items grouped into the following six categories: the respondent's perception of the availability of resources and resources that were needed in the community, the respondent's level of sexual orientation disclosure, the respondent's experiences with discrimination and violence, the respondent's attitudes toward same-sex marriage, the respondent's political awareness and political involvement, and lastly the respondent's demographics. Rank-ordered responses, anchored

scales, and multiple-response check boxes were used for quantitative items, and brief open- and closed-ended responses were used for qualitative items.

Data Analysis

Variables

There are two dependent variables (DV) that were created from one survey item. “Do you have plans to relocate?” was originally coded 0, *plans to relocate in 1 to 3 years*; 1, *plans to relocate in 4 to 6 years*; 2, *plans to relocate in 7 or more years*; 3, *yes, but not sure when*; and 4, *no plans to relocate*. The first DV, plans to relocate (out of state), was dichotomized by collapsing the original item’s responses 0-3 and recoding them as 0, *yes* and recoding 4 as 1, *no*. The second DV, time until relocation was treated as an ordinal-level variable by retaining original items responses 0-3 and eliminating responses 3 and 4. Due to the limited number of responses for *plans to relocate in 7 or more years* ($n = 3$), the variable was dichotomized into *plans to relocate in 0 to 3 years* and *plans to relocate in 4 or more years*.

There are two independent variables (IV) in this study. The first, reasons for relocation, is a nominal-level variable with the following response choices: 0, *better job opportunities elsewhere*; 1, *current job is transferring me*; 2, *limited LGBTQ-specific community resources*; 3, *limited general community resources*; 4, *no family here*; 5, *physically unhealthy environment*; 6, *stay here was only temporary*; 7, *unfriendly political environment*; 8, *unfriendly social environment*; and 9, *other*. Since this study was concerned with respondents’ perceptions of available LGBTQ resources, the response option *limited LGBTQ-specific community resources* was recoded as 0, *not a reason for relocating*, and 1, *reason for relocating*. The second independent variable, having been a target of nonviolent anti-LGBTQ discrimination, is a nominal-level variable with response choices of *yes*, *no*, or *not sure*. Respondents who answered

not sure were excluded from analyses using this variable, since their categorical response does not fit with the dichotomized response options.

Plans to relocate, time until relocation, and reason for relocation will be analyzed in relation to whether or not the individual reported experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination. An additional variable of age will be analyzed in relation to plans to relocate. Age is a ratio-level variable that respondents indicated by filling in a blank with a whole number.

Statistical Test

The PASW Statistics (19.0) program was used to conduct an analysis of the data. Univariate statistics (e.g., frequency, percentages, and measures of central tendency) were completed to describe and summarize the data. Bivariate measures of association (e.g. Cramer's V test and point biserial correlation) were conducted on all study variables. Binary logistic regression was used to predict the effect of anti-LGBTQ discrimination on plans to relocate.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

All variables, demographic, dependent, and independent, are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographics and Study Variables, Valid Values (N=345)

Characteristics	%(n)	<i>M(SD)</i>
Race		
European American/White, not of Hispanic Origin	83.5(288)	
African American of Black	8.7(30)	
Hispanic/Latino	2.0(7)	
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native	.3(1)	
Asian American or Asian	.9(3)	
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0(0)	
Biracial/Multiracial	2.0(7)	
Other	2.6(9)	
Age		37.2(12.9)
Gender		
Female	46.1(159)	
Male	50.1(173)	
Female to Male	.9(3)	
Trans Woman	1.2(4)	
Trans Man	1.2(4)	
Gender Queer	.6(2)	
Intersex	0(0)	
Other	0(0)	
Sexual Orientation		
Lesbian	33.6(116)	
Gay	47.2(163)	
Bisexual	8.1(28)	
Queer	5.2(18)	

(Table 1 continues.)

(Table 1 continued.)

Characteristics	%(<i>n</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)
Sexual Orientation		
Questioning	0(0)	
Same-Sex Attracted	2.6(9)	
Heterosexual/Straight	.9(3)	
Other	2.3(8)	
Anti-LGBTQ Discrimination		
Yes	53.0(183)	
No	40.3(139)	
Not Sure	6.4(22)	
Plans to Relocate/When		
1-3 years	25.5(88)	
4-6 years	4.3(15)	
7+ years	1.2(4)	
Plans, not sure when	31.6(109)	
No Plans	36.2(125)	
Reasons to relocate		
Better job opportunities elsewhere	42.6(147)	
Current job is transferring me	1.4(5)	
Limited LGBTQ specific community resources	37.1(128)	
Limited general community resources	30.1(104)	
No family here	10.4(36)	
Physically unhealthy environment	12.5(43)	
Stay here was only temporary	5.8(20)	
Unfriendly political environment	29.9(103)	
Unfriendly social environment	28.1(97)	
Other	11.0(38)	

Correlation coefficients for all dependent and independent variables are reported in Table

2. All correlations were significant except for age as it relates to time until relocation and discrimination as it relates to time until relocation.

Table 2*Correlation Among Study Variables for Hypotheses 1.1-1.3*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. Discrimination	--				
2. Plans to Leave	-.102**	--			
3. Time until relocation	.026	NA	--		
4. Reason for relocation	-.231**	.582**	.307**	--	
5. Age	.160***	-.341**	.046	-.239**	--

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ **Table 3***Mean Values or Frequencies for Predictor Variables as a Function of Plans to Relocate*

Variable	<i>Plans to Relocate</i> ($n=216$)	<i>No Plans to Relocate</i> ($n=125$)	$\chi^2(1)$ or $t(339)$
Discrimination (yes)	122	57	$\chi^2 = 3.31$
Age	33.8	42.8	$t = 6.67^{**}$

*** $p < .001$

Reporting non-violent anti-LGBTQ discrimination in the last 3 years significantly increased the chances of individuals reporting plans to relocate when the individuals who reported “not sure” were excluded from analysis, $\beta = .584$, $t(.034)$, $p < .05$.

Table 4*Logistic Regression Predicting Plans to Relocate*

Predictor	β	<i>SE</i>	Odds Ratio
Discrimination	.584	.276	.034*
Age	-.059	.010	.943***

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between experiences with anti-LGBTQ discrimination and plans to relocate among LGBTQ individuals in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. All hypotheses were supported except H1.2, which analyzed anti-LGBTQ discrimination and its association with time until relocation.

Hypothesis 1.1 found that individuals who reported experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination were more likely than individuals who did not report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination to have plans to relocate out of Louisiana. This result fits with the PSOC theory, as well as community connectedness, which emphasizes the importance of an individual's perceived sense of belonging within a larger community (Sarason, 1974). This hypothesis can be interpreted within the PSOC theory by experiences of anti-LGBTQ discrimination associating with a decrease in an individual's sense of belonging, therefore increasing his or her desire to relocate. A recent study by the Human Rights Campaign (2012) ranked the LGBTQ-friendliness of 137 major cities throughout the nation, including Baton Rouge. Out of a possible 100 points, Baton Rouge received 2 points, making it the fourth least-LGBTQ-friendly city in the nation among those surveyed. There was a three-way tie for the least-LGBTQ friendly cities which included Jefferson City, Missouri; Frankfort, Kentucky; and Montgomery, Alabama, all receiving a score of 0 points (HRC, 2012a).

Hypothesis 1.2 found non-significant results, concluding that individuals who report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination were not more likely to report plans to relocate sooner when compared to individuals who did not experience anti-LGBTQ discrimination. This is supported by research that identifies many different reasons or factors that may influence an

individual's decision of when to relocate. For example, individuals may relocate for an employment opportunity, in which case, time is influenced by the timing of the opportunity (Hagelskamp et al., 2010). Some of these factors also influence the immediacy of relocation, such as employment and economic opportunities and education.

Hypothesis 1.3 found significant results, concluding that individuals experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination were more likely to report few LGBTQ resources as their reason for relocating when compared to individuals who plan to relocate but did not report experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination. This is similar to research by Oswald and Culton (2003) that surveyed LGBTQ individuals in rural areas and found that participants reported one of the "worst" parts of their communities as the lack of LGBTQ resources.

The binary logistic regression of Hypothesis 1.4 found that experiencing anti-LGBTQ discrimination significantly predicted plans to relocate. This is similar to other research that finds sexual minorities more likely to relocate than their heterosexual peers (Rosenfeld & Byung-Soo, 2005), as well as research that has shown a recent decrease in queer migration, possibly due to tolerance and acceptance of LGBTQ individuals in mainstream society (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

In hypothesis 2.1, age was significantly associated with plans to relocate, with older participants less likely to report plans to relocate. In hypothesis 2.2, lower ages significantly predicted plans to relocate. There is a lack of research concerning the involuntary relocation of older adults. Also, the research that does exist focuses solely on involuntary relocation of older adults, usually into long-term care facilities (Jungers, 2010).

Limitations

A limitation of the study is the narrow geographic requirements of living in the Baton Rouge area that lacks generalizability to other states, and even other cities within the state. For example, the recent study by the HRC (2012a) awarded Baton Rouge with 2 points out of 100, yet New Orleans received 79 points. Also, the quality of life survey was conducted in 2011, with a limitation being a two-year lapse since the data was collected. This does not take into account influential factors, such as a continuously changing political environment for LGBTQ individuals.

Lastly, a limitation of the study includes the question about reasons for relocating in which participants were asked to check off “all that apply” does not allow weight to be applied to responses. For example, a participant may report reasons for relocating as being both *better job opportunities elsewhere* and *limited LGBTQ-specific*, yet there is no way to know whether one is more prominent than the other in the decision to relocate. A possible solution to this response would be a rank-ordered response, in which the participant would have the opportunity to apply ranking to the reasons for relocation.

Implications for Practice

Professionals in the field of social work should be aware of discrimination that certain individuals or groups of individuals experience. For example, this study looks at the anti-LGBTQ discrimination experienced by sexual minorities. Social workers should also be aware of political inequalities, such as bans on same-sex adoption and same-sex partner benefits, obstacles their clients may face. If a group of individuals lack community resources, social workers should advocate for community resources. Social workers should be aware of specific groups relocation patterns, as well as factors that influence such individuals or groups to relocate. Older adults face

specific barriers related to age, in addition to a sexual minority status. Social workers should be knowledgeable of these barriers that LGBTQ older adults experience. Social workers should also work to extend the limited research on vulnerable populations, such as LGBTQ individuals and specific issues those individuals face.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between discrimination faced by LGBTQ individuals and whether or not that discrimination influenced future plans to relocate. A literature review of LGBTQ discrimination and LGBTQ relocation was discussed with regards to theories such as the PSOC theory and the community connectedness theory. A secondary data analysis conducted on a sample of LGBTQ individuals who participated in a quality-of-life survey found significant results that resulted in findings that support the idea that LGBTQ individuals relocate due to discrimination those individuals have experienced. Although LGBTQ individuals make relocation decisions with their sexual orientation and gender identity in mind (Gorman-Murray, 2007), a continuously changing political environment for LGBTQ equal rights may affect not only experiences with discrimination, but also patterns of relocation.

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APPENDIX: IRB APPROVAL

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair
131 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/irb

– Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-F, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee. Members of this committee can be found at <http://research.lsu.edu/CompliancePoliciesProcedures/InstitutionalReviewBoard%28IRB%29/item24737.html>

– A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:

(A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of parts B thru F.

(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1&2)

(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.

*If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.

(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)

(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (<http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>)

(F) IRB Security of Data Agreement: (<http://research.lsu.edu/files/item26774.pdf>)

1) Principal Investigator: Elaine M. Maccio, Ph.D. Rank: Associate Professor
Dept: School of Social Work Ph: (225) 578-1109 E-mail: emaccio@lsu.edu

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each
*If student, please identify and name supervising professor in this space

Margaret Smith

IRB# <u>E8114</u>	LSU Proposal #
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Complete Application
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Subjects Training

3) Project Title:

Discrimination of Sexual Minorities and Plans to Relocate

Study Exempted By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Exemption Expires: 1/30/2016

4) Proposal? (yes or no) NO If Yes, LSU Proposal Number

Also, if YES, either

☐ This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant

OR

☐ More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students)

Louisiana's LGBTQ population

*Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: (children <18; the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the aged, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature [Signature] Date 1/15/13 (no per signatures)

** I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Screening Committee Action: Exempted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Exempted <input type="checkbox"/>	Category/Paragraph <u>2</u>
Signed Consent Waived: Yes/No <u>Yes</u>	
Reviewer <u>Mathews</u>	Signature <u>[Signature]</u> Date <u>1/31/13</u>

Study Exempted by:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Exemption Expires: 1/30/2016

Appendix D: Informed Consent

Informed Consent

- 1. Study Title:** Assessing Quality of Life among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Residents of the Greater Baton Rouge Area—2011
- 2. Performance Site:** Louisiana State University School of Social Work, online, and at select churches and leisure establishments in the Greater Baton Rouge area.
- 3. Investigators:** The Principal Investigator, Elaine M. Maccio, Ph.D., LCSW, is available for questions about this study Monday through Friday, 9:00A-4:30P, by calling (225)578-1109 or via e-mail (emaccio@lsu.edu).
- 4. Purpose of this Study:** The purpose of this study is to better understand the quality of life and the unique experiences of LGBTQ residents of the Greater Baton Rouge area.
- 5. Subject Inclusion:** Individuals over the age of 18 residing in the Greater Baton Rouge Area.
- 6. Number of Participants:** 500-1,000
- 7. Study Procedures:** You are invited to complete a 63-item survey regarding your personal characteristics, opinions on LGBTQ community resources, opinions about political/legal issues and the LGBT community, and experiences disclosure, discrimination, and violence.
- 8. Benefits:** This study may yield valuable information regarding the quality of life among LGBTQ residents of the Greater Baton Rouge area and needed LGBTQ-specific resources.
- 9. Risks:** There is no known risk to participating in this study. Should you experience any distress due to the sensitive nature of some of the survey items, you are encouraged to contact the Investigator or utilize the resource list that has been provided for you at the end of this survey.
- 10. Right to refuse:** Your participation is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to you.
- 11. Privacy:** Your identifying information, should you provide any, will be destroyed immediately after use, will in no way be linked with your responses, and will not be included in the dissemination of the results. Your identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The online survey is hosted by Survey Monkey, which uses state-of-the-art technologies to minimize the risk of unauthorized access (e.g., hacking).
- 12. Compensation:** No compensation will be provided in exchange for your participation.
- 13. Participants' Rights:** If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, LSU Institutional Review Board, by calling (225) 578-8692.

VITA

Margaret Smith was born and raised in New Iberia, Louisiana, and attended North Lewis Elementary School, St. Edward's Elementary School, and Catholic High School. Margaret graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology with a minor in sociology in May 2011. She continued her studies at Louisiana State University and obtained a Master of Social Work degree in May 2013. Margaret currently lives in Baton Rouge, Louisiana with her partner Caitlin Smith. Margaret plans to move to Lafayette, Louisiana to pursue a career in corrections.